



## 4-H Youth Development

### 2000 Programs of Excellence

Life Skills

#### Communications & Expressive Arts

##### **Public Speaking Contest**

*Florida*

###### Situation

With the added emphasis in Florida on high-stakes educational testing, youth are getting fewer opportunities to develop public speaking skills in the classroom. Employers today tell 4-H staff that employees have to be able to talk in front of others and to organize their thoughts quickly. The Florida 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest enables thousands of youth to develop public speaking skills early in life, preparing them for a brighter future.

###### Program Description

More than 55,000 youth in grades 4 through 6 participate annually in this 25-year-old program, which is active in more than 40 of Florida's 67 counties. Both rural and urban youth participate. 4-H agents receive a package of materials for the contest in the fall and they approach schools and teachers to interest them in the program. Teachers present the program to their classes, distributing handouts about what constitutes good speech and encouraging youth to work on their speeches. A classroom contest is held, and then a school-wide contest. In many counties, a county-wide contest also occurs. Typically, the program occurs in the springtime.

###### Stakeholder Satisfaction

Teachers appreciate the handouts and classroom support materials. Many parents like the opportunity to see their children succeed in this program. Youth are encouraged to deliver speeches about something they like and feel passionately about.

###### Accomplishments and Impacts

In this program youth develop public speaking and organizational skills, while developing self-esteem and

confidence. One unique story illustrates the profound impact this program had on one family: "My son had a speech disfluency. He stuttered and stumbled over his words. It got to the point where he was limiting his speech to only three or four word sentences. I winced to watch my son struggling. I know it was hard for him at school with the other kids because of his speech problem. His mother and I wanted the best for him, and we took him to several speech therapists. No matter what we tried, his disfluency didn't improve. If anything, it was getting worse. One day when he was in the fourth-grade, he came home from school and announced that he was going to compete in the 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest. I panicked, wondering how on earth my son, would ever manage to deliver a speech before a crowd. But he was determined. We practiced his speech over and over at home. When the big day arrived I went to the school auditorium. With bated breath, I listened as he delivered his speech perfectly, without one stumble or stutter. He was presented with a medal. As I saw my son standing before the crowd beaming and waving to me, tears came to my eyes. I felt so much pride in that one moment. My son's determination to conquer his problem came when he resolved to participate in the 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest. And with hard work and effort, he had achieved his goal. We owe his success in conquering disfluency to that experience." Admittedly, the impact of this program is not as dramatic on every child as it was in this case, but the 4-H/Tropicana Public Speaking Contest does help thousands of children develop important skills for the future.

#### Resource Commitment

Tropicana provides the classroom handouts, pencils for the youth participants, and recognition medals and certificates.

#### Collaborators

Tropicana, Inc.

#### Contact Person(s)

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Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To  
4-H/Youth Development

## **4-H Clovers & Co.**

*Georgia*

### Situation

Youth ages 9 - 19 need opportunities to enhance their self-esteem, acquire teamwork skills, and develop leadership abilities. Performing Arts is the most popular project in Georgia 4-H with an average of 723 4-H'ers competing at District and State 4-H competitions yearly. A vehicle was needed to showcase and highlight these talented 4-H'ers while keeping them involved in all aspects of the program. Georgia 4-H also needed a public relations instrument to publicize 4-H throughout the state and nation.

Georgia 4-H created the Clovers & Co. Performing Arts group. A group of volunteers and 4-H staff members plan the show schedule and manage all the details for the performances (10 - 12 per year) including auditions, song selection, show development, instrumentation, costume design, choreography, lighting, and sound. They promote the group to civic groups, associations, and the general public on the state and national level, as well as to Extension faculty and 4-H members.

### Program Description

The Georgia 4-H Clovers & Co. Performing Arts group is composed of thirty-five 4-H singers, dancers, and instrumentalists from across the state.

### Accomplishments and Impacts

Clovers & Co. provides a learning ground for 4-H members to improve their performing arts skills and increases their interest in the overall Georgia 4-H program. Over 125 4-H'ers audition annually for positions in the show cast, band, and production crew. In the past year, eight members of the cast were elected to serve as District 4-H Leadership Officers, while three additional members served as State 4-H Officers. Twelve were named District 4-H Winners in their 4-H projects with five of these achieving State titles. Over 500 4-H'ers have been a part of Clovers & Co. through the past nineteen years. Over 900 parent volunteers have contributed to the group through fund-raising, chaperoning, set-building, and most importantly, support of their Clovers & Co. members. Several alumni of the group have achieved successful careers in the music and recording industry as a result of their involvement in Clovers & Co., and numerous other 4-H'ers have been exposed to career opportunities in the Performing Arts arena.

Clovers & Co. promotes the Georgia 4-H Program on the state and national level in a positive manner and is recognized as the premiere 4-H Performing Arts group in the nation. The group reaches average audiences of 6,500 Georgians yearly.

Out of state performances reach an average audience of 750 - 1000 patrons yearly. Because of their stellar reputation, Clovers & Co. is in constant demand across the state and nation. Numerous states wish to emulate the program with their 4-H'ers.

#### Resource Commitment

The program is funded through 4-H funds, donor support, and show fees.

#### Collaborators

The program is run by volunteers and 4-H staff members. County 4-H program resources are also utilized to recruit and promote the group to potential members.

#### Contact Person(s)

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### **Dare-To-Be-You Summer Adventure Camp**

*Colorado*

#### Program Description

The Dare-to-be-You Summer Adventure Camp targets youth (aged 9-13) of rural, diverse Montezuma County (11% Native American, 8.6% Hispanic, 80.4% Non-Hispanic/European descent). The camp's central location in Cortez, Colorado neighbors on rural Dolores, Mancos, the Northern Navajo and Ute Mountain, Ute Reservations, and attracts youth from these areas. It began as a pilot project in 1995, in a collaborative effort between the Dare-to-be-You, the Pinon Project Family Center, and the Montezuma-Cortez School District to address the following unmet community needs for area youth:

- Lack of supervised summer activities for youth (aged 9-13).
- Need for program to develop self esteem and self-responsibility in youth.
- Need to create inter-cultural awareness and sensitivity.
- Need to develop leadership skills and role modeling in community residents—including youth.

Statistically significant increases in levels of self esteem and self efficacy benefit the campers and teen leaders in this program, as results in previous years have shown through pre and post surveys. Additionally, it is expected that this program will continue to promote a cross cultural community, as it utilizes the talents and input of family and community members from a variety of cultural backgrounds who share a common

concern—their children.

### Stakeholder Satisfaction

The combined FTE commitment on this project was .1 for Adult Directors and .12 for Teen Counselors. The Dare-to-be-You's Summer Adventure Camp runs for seven weeks and offers 25 youth (aged 9-13) the opportunity to discover the special cultures (Ancestral Pueblo, Cowboy, Navajo, Hispanic, Ute Mountain Ute) past and present in Southwest Colorado. In the first week of camp, "Clans" of five campers and at least one Teen Counselor are formed. Each one is named after one of the aforementioned special cultural groups. Youth work as a team in these Clans, creating a slogan, totem pole, and a poster which represent the unique culture of their group and their own special interests and gifts. Clan groups highlight a sense of belonging, teamwork, and the individual strengths of each camper, promoting self esteem. An emphasis on building cross cultural understanding is shown through the active involvement of family and community volunteers from the different cultures who serve as special guests. These guest speakers share their culture, time and talents with the camp. Field trips and on-site group projects also promote this extended sense of community. Competency building activities of the Dare-to-be You are incorporated into the Summer Adventure Camp to further teach self esteem, leadership, and conflict resolution skills. All activities in the camp are designed to be fun, inclusive, and positive, while teaching the above mentioned skills and cultural awareness.

Stakeholder's satisfaction is indicated through collaborating agencies, volunteers, and participating families whose involvement provides scholarships, continued referrals, and guest speakers. Satisfaction is also shown by a high return of former campers. Participant satisfaction is measured by campers' daily journal entries and feedback. In their journals, campers are asked, "What was the best thing about camp today?" and "What was the worst?" Usually their entries reflect, "There was no worst thing, everything was fun." Campers ask counselors, "Why can't we have camp every day?" and convince their parents to take them into town for camp, even when the parents say they are too tired. Perhaps the most significant measure of participant satisfaction is the fact that many campers return for multiple years, to renew old friendships and to create new ones.

### Accomplishments and Impacts

Since its 1995 pilot, the Summer Adventure Camp has touched 95 campers and 29 teen counselors. The overall structure of the camp has created networks among parents, extended the campers understanding of other cultures in our area, and created friendships among the campers that otherwise may not

have existed. Campers are representative of cultures in the area (Hispanic, Navajo, Ute Mountain Ute and Anglo).

Pre and post surveys administered to campers have shown statistically significant increases in levels of self esteem and self efficacy, or one's belief that he/she is responsible for one's own successes.

#### Resource Commitment

Funding for the 1999 Summer Adventure Camp was generated through the following sources: \$900 participant fees, \$2,324 Shell Oil Foundation and Tara Skelton Memorial Fund, \$6.00 from the Sutherland Memorial Fund, and \$2,292 was generated internally through sales of materials.

#### Collaborators

The Colorado Youth 4-H Fund, Pinon Project Family Center, Montezuma County Partners, CKIDS, Montezuma-Cortez School District, and Southwest Mental Health have all been collaborators with this camp. Many private citizens have also collaborated on this project.

#### Contact Person(s)

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#### Other Base Program Areas This Program Applies To

Community Resource & Economic Development  
Family Development & Resource Management  
4-H/Youth Development(program funding & marketing), the Massachusetts 4-H All Stars (who serve as hosts/hostesses at the state event) and the Nashoba Regional High School and Bedford Middle School (host sites for the state program).

### **4-H Kids on The Block Program**

*Maryland*

#### Situation

"How do you go play baseball if you are blind?" "Do people make fun of you because you are in a wheelchair?" Everyone is different; from the color of hair and skin to the disabilities they face. It is important for youth to learn to accept individuals and to understand their differences and disabilities. Knowledge is a powerful tool and the Carroll County 4-H Kids On The Block Disability Awareness Puppeteering Program is designed to provide youth with the knowledge to interact positively with all individuals. The Carroll County 4-H Youth Development Program and County Public Schools have cooperated to provide the Kids On The Block Disability Awareness

Puppeteering Program. This program began as a result of Maryland's Public Law 94-142 (main streaming) which increased the number of disabled youth in the 4-H program as well as the local school system.

#### Program Description

The program is designed to educate youth at an early age when they are often more receptive to learning. The program presents four disabilities/differences that are coordinated each year with the school's second and fourth grade health curriculum. Current topics are blindness, Down Syndrome, multiculturalism and deafness for second grade and cerebral palsy, cancer, diabetes and learning disabilities for fourth grade. This program is presented to over 4,000 youth each year.

#### Stakeholder Satisfaction

A county faculty assistant conducts the program, coordinates it with schools, supervises and trains the 26 teen volunteer puppeteers. The puppetry program uses male and female child-size puppets of different races and ethnic backgrounds. The skits are performed with two puppets, one with a disability/difference, and involve situations that youth may encounter in their classroom. The child-size puppets are large, colorful and are brought to life by the puppeteers. Students often comment that they forget there is a person operating the puppet. The interaction of these puppets is presented in a humorous and non-threatening atmosphere. Students gain knowledge about disabilities/differences and related limitations, but more importantly, learn how these individuals are just like them. It is designed to make students aware of the impact their actions have on disabled and challenged youth. It shows youth can develop caring relationships with their peers, including those who are challenged.

This program is unique in its recruitment of peer volunteers to present the skits. Youth are easily influenced by their peers. In 2000, 26 teens volunteered as puppeteers. These youth are also very unique and different and volunteer for different reasons. Many volunteer because they like the drama and puppetry aspect of the program. Some have wanted to be a puppeteer since they saw the program as an elementary student. Others volunteer because they have future ambitions to work with the disabled and view this program as an opportunity to learn and educate others. Still others volunteer because they can relate to a disability that is presented. Either they have a disability or they have a family member or close friend with a disability. These individuals bring a unique wealth of knowledge to deal with the questions and misunderstandings of others. They want to teach others that it is okay to be different and that we have to respect others.



This program is also designed to be interactive and hands-on. At the end of each script, students have the opportunity to ask questions directly to the puppets. The puppeteers remain in character and answer the questions reinforcing important points of the particular disability/difference. In addition, there are demonstrations on real-life instruments used by the disabled in their day-to-day lives to show students so they are able to increase their knowledge about the disabilities.

#### Accomplishments and Impacts

An evaluation process determines the effect the program has on students. For the last three years, evaluation topics have been given to the students to determine what they have learned from the program. A pre-/post test determined if the youth were learning about disabilities—94% of the students improved their individual scores on the post-test. Another evaluation determined if a student's behavioral reaction would change after viewing a program. The survey consisted of four situations and possible responses. One was the desirable response and the others were not. The survey was given to students before viewing the program and repeated after the program. The results indicated that in 6 of the 8 situations, students had a changed reaction to encountering a person with that disability. These results indicate that not only are students learning about specific disabilities, but they are also learning how their reactions can make a difference. In addition, a packet of hands-on activities was distributed to the teachers, designed to allow students to experience what life is like for an individual with a disability. The teachers incorporated the activities into their class curriculum. The teachers commented on how the students enjoyed the activities and thought they portrayed realistic situations for youth to experience life as a disabled person.

The Carroll County 4-H Kids On The Block Program "Makes a Difference" for thousands of students each year as they learn to accept individuals with a disability or difference. Learning these lessons at an early age will help these students to become responsible, caring citizens who realize the impact their actions can have on others. Knowledge is power.

#### Resource Commitment

Over the past three years, the Kids On The Block Program has been awarded \$2,500 in grant money to build and expand the program. The program recently received the National Association of 4-H Agents National Diversity Award.

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